

CHAPTER 9

REBELLION: ITS GRAVITY AND PUNISHMENT

9.1 WHY IS REBELLION A GRAVE CRIME?

We see from the previously mentioned definitions and details that those who revolt and commit acts of terrorism against Muslim citizens and governments do not deserve any concessions, because the power, strength, stability and survival of any nation depends on unity and community cohesion, which these terrorists attempt to destroy. The gravity and magnitude of rebellion against Muslim governments can be gauged from the following commandment of God Almighty,

﴿إِنَّمَا جَزَاءُ الَّذِينَ يُحَارِبُونَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا أَنْ يُقَتَّلُوا أَوْ يُصَلَّبُوا أَوْ تُقَطَّعَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ مِّنْ خَلْفٍ أَوْ يُنْفَوْا مِنَ الْأَرْضِ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ خِزْيٌ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَلَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ عَظِيمٌ﴾

*‘Indeed, those who wage war against God and His Messenger and remain engaged in creating mischief in the land [i.e., perpetrate terrorism, robbery and burglary], their punishment is that they should be slain, or crucified, or their hands and their feet on opposite sides should be cut off, or that they should be exiled from the land. That is for them a humiliation in this world, and for them there is a terrible torment in the Hereafter’.*¹

This verse indicates that it is binding on the state to eliminate those who terrorise society through militancy and violence, irrespective of their faith that they claim to uphold. Explaining the aforementioned verse, Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه said,

مَنْ شَهَرَ السَّلَاحَ فِي فِتْنَةِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَأَخَافَ السَّبِيلَ، ثُمَّ ظَفَرَ بِهِ وَقَدَرَ عَلَيْهِ، فِيمَا مِ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ فِيهِ بِالْخِيَارِ إِنْ شَاءَ قَتَلَهُ وَإِنْ شَاءَ صَلَبَهُ وَإِنْ شَاءَ قَطَعَ يَدَهُ وَرِجْلَهُ.

¹ Qur’ān 5:33.

‘Whoever takes up arms against the community of Islam, terrorises the roads and is subsequently captured and apprehended, it is the discretion of the government to kill him, crucify him or cut off his hands and feet from opposite sides’.¹

Imam al-Ṭabarī and Ibn Kathīr reported that Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab, Mujāhid, ‘Aṭā’, al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī and al-Ḍaḥḥāk all shared the same position. Imam al-Suyūṭī narrated the same view in *al-Durr al-manthūr*. Imam al-Qurṭubī mentioned in his exegesis that this verse was revealed in connection with a group in the time of the Prophet ﷺ. They murdered peaceful people and plundered wealth, and in turn received a severe punishment.

This verse also indicates that capital punishment is lawful. Al-Qāḍī Thanāʾ Allāh Pānīpatī wrote:

أَجْمَعُوا عَلَى أَنَّ الْمُرَادَ بِالْمُحَارِبِينَ الْمُفْسِدِينَ فِي هَذِهِ الْآيَةِ قَطَاعُ الطَّرِيقِ، سَوَاءَ كَانُوا مُسْلِمِينَ أَوْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الدِّمَةِ. وَاتَّقُوا عَلَى أَنْ مَنْ بَرَزَ وَشَهَرَ السَّلَاحَ مُخِيفًا مُغِيرًا خَارِجَ الْمِصْرِ بِحَيْثُ لَا يُدْرِكُهُ الْعَوْتُ، فَهُوَ مُحَارِبٌ قَاطِعٌ لِلطَّرِيقِ جَارِيَةٌ عَلَيْهِ أَحْكَامُ هَذِهِ الْآيَةِ. . . . وَقَالَ الْبَغَوِيُّ: الْمُكَابِرُونَ فِي الْأُمُصَارِ دَاخِلُونَ فِي حُكْمِ هَذِهِ الْآيَةِ.

They [the jurists] concurred that ‘those who wage war and sow corruption in the earth’ mentioned in the verse are the brigands, whether they are Muslims or from the non-Muslim citizens. They also agreed that the one who takes up arms for the purpose of spreading fear on the roads outside of the urban areas—as no help can reach there—is an unlawful combatant [*muḥārib*] and brigand who is subject to the rulings contained in this verse. . . . Al-Baghawī said, ‘Those who rebel within the urban areas are also subject to the ruling contained in this verse’.²

¹ Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-ʿAẓīm*, 2:51; al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmiʿ al-bayān*, 6:214.

² Al-Qāḍī Thanāʾ Allāh Pānīpatī, *al-Tafsīr al-maẓharī*, 3:86.

Al-Zamakhsharī interpreted this verse, saying,

يُحَارِبُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَمُحَارَبَتُهُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فِي حُكْمٍ مُحَارَبَتِهِ.

‘They wage war against the Messenger of God ﷺ, and waging war against the Muslims takes the same legal ruling as waging war against him ﷺ’.¹

Citing this exact quote from al-Zamakhsharī, Abū Ḥaḥṣ al-Ḥanbalī commented:

أَنَّ الْمَقْصُودَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحَارِبُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَإِنَّمَا ذَكَرَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ - تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى - تَعْظِيمًا وَتَفْخِيمًا لِمَنْ يُحَارِبُ، كَقَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ﴾.

What is meant here is that they wage war against the Messenger of God ﷺ—and God’s name was only mentioned in exaltation and esteem for the one against whom war is waged, similar to the statement of God Most High, ‘Indeed, those who pledge fealty to you are only pledging fealty to God’. [Qur’ān 48:10]²

Speaking on this verse, Imam Ibn Humām said that terrorism is tantamount to waging war against God, the Messenger ﷺ and the general body of Muslims:

سُمِّيَ قَاطِعُ الطَّرِيقِ مُحَارِبًا لِلَّهِ لِأَنَّ الْمُسَافِرَ مُعْتَمِدٌ عَلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى. فَالَّذِي يُرِيدُ أَمْنَهُ مُحَارِبٌ لِمَنْ اعْتَمَدَ عَلَيْهِ فِي تَحْصِيلِ الْأَمْنِ. وَأَمَّا مُحَارَبَتُهُ لِرَسُولِهِ ﷺ فَإِمَّا بِاعْتِبَارِ عَصِيَانِ أَمْرِهِ وَإِمَّا بِاعْتِبَارِ أَنَّ الرَّسُولَ ﷺ هُوَ الْحَافِظُ لَطَرِيقِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْخُلَفَاءِ وَالْمُلُوكِ بَعْدَهُ نَوَابَهُ. فَإِذَا قُطِعَ الطَّرِيقُ الَّتِي تَوَلَّى حِفْظَهَا بِنَفْسِهِ وَنَائِبِهِ فَقَدْ حَارَبَهُ. أَوْ هُوَ عَلَى حَذَفٍ مُضَافٍ أَيِ يُحَارِبُونَ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ.

The brigand is called one who wages war against God, because the traveller relies upon God Most High; so

¹ Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf ‘an ḥaqā’iq ghawāmiḍ al-Tanzīl*, 1:661.

² Abū Ḥaḥṣ al-Ḥanbalī, *al-Lubāb fī ‘ulūm al-Kitāb*, 7:303.

the one who spoils his security wages war against the one in whom the traveller trusts for the obtainment of security. As for his waging war against His Messenger ﷺ, it is either because he disobeys him ﷺ, or because the Messenger ﷺ is the one who safeguards the paths of the Muslims, and the caliphs and kings after him are his deputies. So he who acts as a highway bandit on the roads that the Messenger ﷺ and his deputies took upon themselves to safeguard has waged war against him. On the other hand, the phrase can be understood as one in which the first particle of the construction is omitted, so in other words it means those who wage war against the servants of God.¹

These aforementioned quotes prove that those who engage in terrorism are engaged in war against God and His Messenger ﷺ and the Muslim community entire.

9.2 AN IMPORTANT POINT

Highway robbers and bandits are also declared rebels and must be put to death according to the verse of *Sūra al-Mā'ida* and its subsequent exegeses. Highway robbers block roads and cause misery to God's creation. In the present-day scenario, this crime also includes incidents where terrorists hold people hostage by taking over buildings, schools or mosques by force.

Terrorism is a form of social disruption that causes peaceful people to die a tormenting death and suffer from psychological distress and mental disorders. Terrorism has plagued the entire society with fear. Since terrorists attempt to mislead people by baseless and specious interpretations, their activities are a form of religious strife. This is also the reason why God declared them killers of humanity, or worse, those who wage war against God and His Messenger ﷺ. The Almighty has declared these mischief-mongers and terrorists the killers of humanity or the perpetrators of even a bigger sin. God's words are clear,

¹ Ibn Humām, *Fath al-Qadīr*, 5:177.

﴿وَالْفِتْنَةُ أَشَدُّ مِنَ الْقَتْلِ﴾

‘And tribulation [fitna] is worse than killing’.¹

9.3 THE PROPHET’S ﷺ CONDEMNATION OF ARMED UPRISING AGAINST THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

The Prophet ﷺ vehemently condemned the forces of dissention and declared them outside the pale of Islam, saying, ‘they are not from me’. They deviate from the right path, indiscriminately kill peaceful people, and rise in revolt against the state and society at large. Our Prophet ﷺ, the one who gave us the Shariah, prescribed severe punishments against rebels and mischief-makers, and the jurists followed suit with legal edicts in their respective periods.

The Prophet ﷺ severely warned against rebellion,

مَنْ خَرَجَ مِنَ الطَّاعَةِ وَفَارَقَ الْجَمَاعَةَ فَمَاتَ، مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً، وَمَنْ قَاتَلَ تَحْتَ رَايَةٍ عَمِيَّةٍ يَغْضَبُ لِعَصْبَةٍ أَوْ يَدْعُو إِلَى عَصِيَّةٍ أَوْ يَنْصُرُ عَصْبَةً فَقَتِلَ فَقِتْلَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً، وَمَنْ خَرَجَ عَلَى أُمَّتِي يَضْرِبُ بَرًّاهَا وَفَاجِرَهَا وَلَا يَتَحَاشَى مِنْ مُؤْمِنِهَا وَلَا يَفِي لِذِي عَهْدٍ عَهْدَهُ فَلَيْسَ مِنِّي وَلَسْتُ مِنْهُ.

‘Whoever rebels against the writ of the Muslim state [and challenges its authority] and separates himself from the community [jamā‘a] and then dies, he dies the death of one in a state of *jāhiliyya* [pre-Islamic time of ignorance]. And whoever fights under a blind banner, becomes angry for the sake of ignorant bigotry, calls to ignorant bigotry and gives support to blind bigotry and is then killed, his death is one of *jāhiliyya*. And whoever secedes from my nation [and rebels against the state, raising legions and troops], killing its righteous and sinful members and feels no compunction [in killing] its believers and does not fulfil the oath of the one from whom an oath is taken, then he is not from me and I am not from him’.²

¹ Qur’ān 2:191.

² Narrated by Muslim in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-imāra* [The Book of Leadership], Screen View Only—Click to get a hard copy: <http://www.MinhajPublications.com>

In this hadith, the Prophet ﷺ declared that the blind pursuit of war and fighting is lethal against the community cohesion. If someone fights against the main body of the Muslim *Umma*, or attempts to foment hostilities on the basis of extremism, the Prophet ﷺ has not only declared his death one in a state of gross ignorance, but he has also expelled him from the *Umma*.

The Prophet ﷺ also said,

مَنْ خَلَعَ يَدًا مِنْ طَاعَةٍ لَقِيَ اللَّهَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا حُجَّةَ لَهُ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ وَلَيْسَ فِي عُنُقِهِ
بَيْعَةٌ مَاتَ مِيتَةً جَاهِلِيَّةً.

‘Whoever withdraws his obedience [to the rightful ruler] shall meet God on the Day of Resurrection bereft of any argument; and whoever dies the death of a rebel against the Muslim state dies the death of pre-Islamic ignorance [*jāhiliyya*]’.¹

The odiousness of unjust rebellion can be gauged from a unique hadith report found in Imam al-Bayhaqī’s *Shu‘ab al-Īmān*, from our master ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās ؓ who said,

لَوْ بَغَى جَبَلٌ عَلَى جَبَلٍ لَجَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْبَاغِيَ مِنْهُمَا دَكًّا.

‘If one mountain rebelled against another mountain, God would have surely pulverised the rebellious one’.²

Speaking about the punishment that should be meted out to rebel groups, Imam al-Kāsānī wrote in *Badā’i‘ al-ṣanā’i‘*:

إِنَّ عِلْمَ الْإِمَامِ أَنَّ الْخَوَارِجَ يَشْهَرُونَ السَّلَاحَ وَيَتَأَهَّبُونَ لِلْقِتَالِ، فَيَنْبَغِي لَهُ أَنْ يَأْخُذَهُمْ

chapter: ‘The Obligation to Stick to the Main Body of the Muslims in the Time of Trials’, 3:1476, 1477 §1848; al-Nasā’ī in *al-Sunan: Kitāb taḥrīm al-dam* [The Book on the Prohibition of Bloodshed], 7:123 §4114; and Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal in *al-Musnad*, 2:296 §488.

¹ Narrated by Muslim in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-imāra* [The Book of Leadership], chapter: ‘The Obligation to Stick to the Main Body of the Muslims in the Time of Trials’, 3:1478 §1851; and al-Bayhaqī in *al-Sunan al-kubrā*, 8:156.

² Narrated by al-Bayhaqī in *Shu‘ab al-Īmān*, 5:291 §6693; and cited by al-Dhahabī in *al-Kabā’ir*, 1:603; and al-Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-manthūr*, 4:353.

وَيَحْسِبُهُمْ حَتَّى يَقْلَعُوا عَنْ ذَلِكَ وَيُخْذِلُوا تَوْبَةً. لِأَنَّهُ لَوْ تَرَكَهُمْ لَسَعَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ
بِالْفَسَادِ فَيَأْخُذُهُمْ عَلَى أَيْدِيهِمْ. وَلَا يَبْدُوهُمْ الْإِمَامُ بِالْقِتَالِ حَتَّى يَبْدُوهُ لَأَنَّ قِتَالَهُمْ
لِدَفْعِ شَرِّهِمْ لَا لِشَرِّ شَرِكِهِمْ. لِأَنَّهُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ فَمَا لَمْ يَتَوَجَّهَ الشَّرُّ مِنْهُمْ لَا يُقَاتِلُهُمْ.
وَأِنْ لَمْ يَعْلَمْ الْإِمَامُ بِذَلِكَ حَتَّى تَعْسَكُوا وَتَاهَبُوا لِلْقِتَالِ، فَيَنْبَغِي لَهُ أَنْ يَدْعُوهُمْ
إِلَى الْعَدْلِ وَالرَّجُوعِ إِلَى رَأْيِ الْجَمَاعَةِ أَوَّلًا لِرَجَاءِ الْإِجَابَةِ وَقَبُولِ الدَّعْوَةِ كَمَا فِي
حَقِّ أَهْلِ الْحَرْبِ. وَكَذَا رُوِيَ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا عَلِيًّا عليه السلام لَمَّا خَرَجَ عَلَيْهِ أَهْلُ حُرُورَاءَ نَدَبَ
إِلَيْهِمْ عَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبَّاسٍ رضي الله عنه لِيَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى الْعَدْلِ. فَدَعَاهُمْ وَنَاطَرَهُمْ فَإِنْ أَجَابُوا كَفَّ
عَنْهُمْ وَإِنْ أَبَوْا قَاتَلَهُمْ لِقَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: ﴿فَإِنْ بَعَثَ إِحْدَهُمَا عَلَى الْأُخْرَى فَقَاتِلُوا النَّبِيَّ
تَبَعِيَ حَتَّى تَفِئَ إِلَى أَمْرِ اللَّهِ﴾ وَكَذَا قَاتَلَ سَيِّدَنَا عَلِيٌّ عليه السلام أَهْلَ حُرُورَاءَ بِالنَّهْرَوَانِ
بِحَضْرَةِ الصَّحَابَةِ رضي الله عنهم.

If the government learns that the Kharijites [terrorists] are wielding weapons and preparing for battle, it must seize them and detain them until they desist and repent. If the government were to leave them, they would most certainly spread more terrorism on the earth. Hence it should apprehend them but not fight them until they initiate hostilities, because fighting them is for the sake of repelling their *evil*, not the evil of their polytheism [as it is for the pagans], for they are Muslims; and so long as their evil is not directed to others they are not to be fought. Therefore the government should first invite them to observe justice and return to the view of the greater community [*jamā'a*], in hopes that they will respond and accept the invitation—as is the practice with the people with whom there are hostilities [*ahl al-harb*]. On this note, it is reported that when the Ḥarūriyya rebelled against our master 'Alī رضي الله عنه, he sent 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās رضي الله عنه to invite them to justice. He attempted to persuade them and debated them. Those amongst them who responded positively were left alone and those amongst them who refused were fought, as per the words of the Most High,

‘So if one group rebels against the other then fight, all of you together, against the rebellious one until it returns to the command of God’.¹ And similarly, ‘Alī عليه السلام, along with the Companions, fought against the Ḥarūriyya at Nahrawan.²

Those who see some inkling of jihad within the current anti-state activities of terrorists should know with certainty that taking the lives of peaceful Muslims is no jihad at all. Rather, such acts malign the exalted concept of jihad. It is a part of faith to consider rebellion both unlawful and anti-social.

9.4 THE THREAT OF HELL AWAITS THOSE WHO FOMENT REBELLION

No Muslim is allowed to rebel against the Muslim polity. Muslims are commanded to stay away from those groups of rebels and terrorists who provoke sedition and militancy against the collective order of a Muslim state. Imam al-Bukhārī and Muslim narrated from Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān رضي الله عنه who said,

كَانَ النَّاسُ يَسْأَلُونَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ عَنِ الْخَيْرِ، وَكُنْتُ أَسْأَلُهُ عَنِ الشَّرِّ مَخَافَةَ أَنْ يُدْرِكَنِي. فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّا كُنَّا فِي جَاهِلِيَّةٍ وَشَرٌّ فَجَاءَنَا اللَّهُ بِهَذَا الْخَيْرِ، فَهَلْ بَعْدَ هَذَا الْخَيْرِ شَرٌّ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ. فَقُلْتُ: هَلْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ الشَّرِّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ، وَفِيهِ دَخْرٌ. قُلْتُ: وَمَا دَخْنُهُ؟ قَالَ: قَوْمٌ يَسْتَتُونَ بِغَيْرِ سُنَّتِي وَيَهْدُونَ بِغَيْرِ هَدْيِي تَعْرِفُ مِنْهُمْ وَتُكْرِ. فَقُلْتُ: هَلْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ الْخَيْرِ مِنْ شَرٍّ؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ، دُعَاةٌ عَلَى أَبْوَابِ جَهَنَّمَ مَنْ أَجَابَهُمْ إِلَيْهَا قَذَفُوهُ فِيهَا. فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، صِفْهُمْ لَنَا. قَالَ: نَعَمْ قَوْمٌ مِنْ جِلْدَتِنَا وَيَتَكَلَّمُونَ بِأَلْسِنَتِنَا. قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، فَمَا تَرَى إِنْ أَدْرَكَنِي ذَلِكَ؟ قَالَ: تَلْزَمُ جَمَاعَةَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَإِمَامَهُمْ. فَقُلْتُ: فَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُمْ جَمَاعَةً وَلَا إِمَامًا؟ قَالَ: فَاعْتَزِلْ تِلْكَ الْفِرْقَ كُلَّهَا، وَلَوْ أَنْ تَعَصَّ عَلَى أَصْلِ شَجَرَةٍ حَتَّى يُدْرِكَ الْمَوْتُ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ.

¹ Qur’ān 29:9.

² Al-Kāsānī, *Badā’i’ al-ṣanā’i’*, 7:120.

‘The people used to ask the Messenger of God ﷺ about the good, but I would ask him about evil for fear that it would overtake me. I said, “O Messenger of God! We were in a state of extreme ignorance and evil and then God brought us this good. Tell me, will there be any evil after this good?” He ﷺ said, “Yes”. I then asked, “And will there be any good after that evil?” He ﷺ said, “Yes, but it will be mixed”. I asked, “So what is this mixture?” He ﷺ replied, “There will come a people who will follow a way other than my Sunna and a path different from my guidance. You will see some things from them that you will approve of, and other things that you detest”. I asked him, “Will there be any evil after that good?” He ﷺ replied, “Yes. There will be people who invite to the gates of Hell; whoever responds to their invitation shall be cast by them into it”. I asked, “O Messenger of God! Describe them for us”. He ﷺ said, “Of course. They are a folk from our race and who speak our language [i.e., the language of the Muslims]”. I said, “O Messenger of God! What do you think I should do if that time comes upon me?” He ﷺ replied, “Stick to the general body of the Muslims [*jamā‘a*] and their ruler”. I asked, “But what if there is neither a general body nor a righteous ruler?” He replied, “Then steer clear of all those groups completely, even if you must bite firmly onto a tree trunk until death overtakes you”.’¹

This hadith mentions several important points related to the subject under discussion. It mentions that in the final days there will appear dissention and tribulation in the Muslim *Umma*, and that those who instigate rebellion will lead others to Hell instead of Paradise. Their language, colour, appearance and demeanour will

¹ Narrated by al-Bukhārī in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-manāqib* [The Book of Exemplary Virtues], chapter: ‘The Signs of Prophethood in Islam’, 3:1319 §3411; and Muslim in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ: Kitāb al-imāra* [The Book of Leadership], Chapter: ‘The Obligation to Stick to the Main Body of the Muslims in the Time of Tribulation, 3:1475 §1847.

outwardly be that of the Prophet ﷺ but they will show hostility to the majority of mainstream Muslims. Furthermore, they will rise in revolt against the Muslim governments or invite others to revolt. We also learn from this hadith that avoiding these evil people and associating with the main body of Muslims will guarantee that our faith is protected. And finally, we see that the way of terrorism and armed rebellion against the Muslim government contravenes the law of Islam and that those who respond to this call will go to Hell.

Commenting on this hadith, Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ said,

أَحَادِيثُ مُسْلِمٍ الَّتِي أُدْخِلَ فِي الْبَابِ كُلِّهَا حُجَّةٌ فِي مَنْعِ الْخُرُوجِ عَلَى الْأَمْرَاءِ الْجَوْرَةِ
وَلَزُومِ طَاعَتِهِمْ.

‘All the hadith reports of [Ṣaḥīḥ] Muslim placed in this chapter are proofs that it is forbidden to rebel against unjust rulers and disobey them’.¹

This means that all legal, constitutional, democratic and peaceful means can be used against injustice, excess and state oppression, and the methods which have been strictly prohibited are those of terrorism, rebellion and armed struggle.

It is important to understand that there is a vast distinction between enjoining the good and forbidding the evil [*al-amr bi al-ma‘rūf wa al-nahī ‘an al-munkar*] and armed struggle. The Shariah has clearly spelled out rules and regulations for both. It is reported by Abū al-Bukhtarī that it was said to Ḥudhayfa b. al-Yamān رضي الله عنه،

أَلَا نَأْمُرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَنَنْهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّهُ لَحَسَنٌ وَلَكِنْ لَيْسَ مِنَ السُّنَّةِ أَنْ
تَرْفَعَ السَّلَاحَ عَلَى إِمَامِكَ.

‘Should we not enjoin good and forbid evil?’ He said, ‘That is good; however, it is not from the Sunna to take up arms against your government [i.e., it is terrorism and rebellion and no way “bidding good and forbidding evil]”.’²

¹ Qāḍī ‘Iyāḍ, *Ikmāl al-mu‘lim bi fawā'id Muslim*, 6:256–257.

² Narrated by Ibn Abī Shayba in *al-Muṣannaf*, 7:508 §37613; and al-Bayhaqī Screen View Only—Click to get a hard copy: <http://www.MinhajPublications.com>

The method of enjoining good and forbidding evil must be peaceful, and not even an iota of violence is permissible in its enforcement.

9.5 THE UNLAWFULNESS OF USING SLOGANS TO INCITE HATRED AND VIOLENCE

The jurists have declared it a duty of the government to eliminate miscreants and terrorists who kill peaceful people and raise bigoted slogans. Ibn ‘Alā’ al-Andarītī writes in *al-Fatāwā al-tātārkhāniyya*:

إِذَا أَظْهَرَتْ جَمَاعَةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقِبْلَةِ رَأْيًا وَدَعَتْ إِلَيْهِ، وَقَاتَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ وَصَارَتْ لَهُمْ مَنَعَةٌ
وَشَوْكَةٌ وَقُوَّةٌ. فَإِنْ كَانَ ذَلِكَ لِظُلْمِ السُّلْطَانِ فِي حَقِّهِمْ، فَيَنْبَغِي أَنْ لَا يَظْلِمَهُمْ.
فَإِنْ كَانَ لَا يَمْتَنِعُ مِنَ الظُّلْمِ فَقَاتَلَتْ تِلْكَ الطَّائِفَةُ السُّلْطَانَ. فَلَا يَنْبَغِي لِلنَّاسِ أَنْ
يُعِينُوهُمْ وَلَا أَنْ يُعِينُوا السُّلْطَانَ وَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِأَجْلِ أَنَّهُ ظَلَمَهُمْ وَلَكِنَّهُمْ قَالُوا: “الْحَقُّ
مَعَنَا” وَادَّعُوا الْوِلَايَةَ: فَلِلْسُّلْطَانِ أَنْ يُقَاتِلَهُمْ وَلِلنَّاسِ أَنْ يُعِينُوهُ.

Supposing that a group from the people of the *qibla* [i.e., Muslims] appear, raising a banner [i.e., slogan] and calling to it and killing for its sake, and supposing they gain strength, force and power—if that is due to the ruler’s oppression of them, he should not oppress them; and if he ceases to desist from oppressing them and that group continues to fight against the ruler, then the people should neither assist them nor the ruler. And if that group’s fighting is not due to the ruler’s oppression of them, and rather they say, ‘The truth is with us’, and they claim independent authority, then the ruler must fight them to establish the writ of the government and the people must assist him.¹

9.6 KILLING DUE TO SECTARIAN DIFFERENCES IS BLAMEWORTHY

Whatever misguided interpretations terrorists put forth, their major

in *Shu‘ab al-Imān*, 6:62–63.

¹ Ibn al-‘Alā’ al-Andarītī, *al-Fatāwā al-tātārkhāniyya*, 4:172.

claim is that they alone are the representatives of truth. To present it legally and religiously, they also raise the slogan, ‘the truth is on our side’. The extremists of today believe that their view alone represents true Islam and true faith according to the Qur’ān and Sunna. In their minds the rest of the Muslims, who do not approve of their ideas, and all Muslim rulers and governments not governing completely in accordance with Islamic law and who are, in reality, a mixture of good and evil, are disbelievers and polytheists, or at least misguided. These extremists regard democratic institutions and elections as an embodiment of disbelief and believe that it is jihad to fight against them. Due to this ideology, they declare that it is lawful to kill government officials and the masses of people who participate in voting. They also believe that theft and robbery are lawful because, in their minds, they are engaged in a jihad against disbelief and disbelievers. Thus, in their minds, everything they do to achieve their objectives is fair, including suicide bombing, mass killing and wanton acts of violence. The fact remains that all they say and do is misguidance, terrorism and revolt. On that note, the Prophet ﷺ said,

إِنَّمَا أَتَخَوِّفُ عَلَيْكُمْ رَجُلٌ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ حَتَّى إِذَا رُئِيَ عَلَيْهِ بِهِجْتُهُ. وَكَانَ رِدْنًا لِلْإِسْلَامِ
غَيْرُهُ إِلَى مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ، فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهُ وَنَبَذَهُ وَرَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ. وَسَعَى عَلَى جَارِهِ بِالسَّيْفِ
وَرَمَاهُ بِالشَّرْكِ. قَالَ: قُلْتُ: يَا نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ! أَيُّهُمَا أَوْلَى بِالشَّرْكِ؟ الْمَرْمِيُّ أَمْ الرَّامِي؟
قَالَ: بَلِ الرَّامِي.

‘The only thing I fear for you is a man who recites the Qur’ān until you see its beauty upon him, and who supports Islam until God willed, until he abandons it and casts it behind his back and attacks his neighbour [a Muslim] with a sword and accuses him of polytheism [shirk]’. [The narrator of this hadith said,] ‘O Messenger of God! Which of the two is closer to polytheism, the accuser or the accused?’ The Messenger of God ﷺ responded, ‘Of course, it is the accuser’.¹

¹ Narrated by Ibn Hibbān in *al-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 1:282 §81; and al-Bazzār in *al-Musnad*, 7:220 §2793.

The worst manifestation of sectarianism that the Muslim *Umma* faces, and over which Muslims across the world remain worried and divided, is the escalating tendency of accusing others of polytheism. The majority of the Muslims in Europe, the US, the Middle East and the Indian Subcontinent are weathering the storm of allegations from a particular brand of extremists who regard everyone as disbelievers except themselves. In their warped view, the Sufis and saints who rendered excellent service to the faith and spread it during the 1400-year history of Islam did nothing but foster polytheism. They think that they alone have been rightly guided and that the elders and saints of the past generations were ignoramuses, polytheists and innovators.

In truth, many non-Muslims around the world have developed strong hatred towards Islam due to their extremist activities, while the Muslims have come to blows, tearing apart the unity of the *Umma*. The aforementioned hadith is a clear illustration of their misplaced arrogance and false assumptions.